

Council member asks for review of redevelopment guidelines

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Real estate broker: 'I think the county should stay out of our business'

By Courtney Mabeus
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Montgomery County inspectors lack any county guidance when it comes to redevelopment in established neighborhoods, County Council Member Howard Denis said Tuesday.

On the heels of Denis' successful legislation last year regulating the height of replacement homes, he asked that the council review the process through which it allows redevelopment, or "tear-downs," in established neighborhoods.

"I'm continuing to hear concerns from some communities about the application of our laws," Denis said.

Denis has asked the county to examine the laws guiding the approval and demolition of homes and to distinguish between what constitutes renovation projects and new construction.

He has also asked for a review of the county's Department of Permitting Services policies and practices.

Lenn Harley, a real estate broker with Homefinders.com in Montgomery County, was wary of Denis' request.

"Government never does anything without adding regulations to it," Harley said.

She said she believed renovation and redevelopment plans should be left up to individual homeowners.

"I think the county should stay out of our business," Harley said.

The council did not take any action on Denis' request Tuesday. It is scheduled to go before the full council at its Tuesday meeting, said spokesman Patrick Lacefield.

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This home on First Avenue in the Woodside Neighborhood in Silver Spring undergoes renovation. Council Member Howard Denis is trying to implement a new law which would regulate renovation projects. - Examiner file